

Summary of 2008-2009 Teacher Vacancy Survey Results

- The survey was conducted in the fall of 2008 by the Teachers College Institute of the University of Nebraska – Lincoln at the request of the Nebraska Department of Education.
- Surveys were sent to 254 K-12 districts in the state. Data requested from the survey included:
 - ✓ the number of districts that could not find fully qualified teachers (defined as those who are certified to teach and have the appropriate endorsement for the courses they teach);
 - ✓ the number of teacher positions for which schools could not find fully qualified teachers at the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year;
 - ✓ the endorsement areas needed for those unfilled positions;
 - ✓ reasons why the individuals in the applicant pool were not sufficient/appropriate for the positions; and
 - ✓ what schools did to compensate for those unfilled positions.
- The response rate was high (96.5%), with 245 districts returning completed surveys. The returned surveys were regionally representative of K-12 districts in the state.
- There was a total of 64 unfilled positions in the fall of 2008.
- The endorsement areas with the largest number of unfilled positions were:

Special Education	14.1%	Art	6.3%
Foreign Languages	14.1%	Industrial Technology	6.3%
Speech Language Pathology	12.5%	Math	6.3%
English	10.9%	Music	4.7%
Sciences	7.8%	Guidance Counselor	3.1%
Agriculture	6.3%		
- There were 51 districts (21% of the returned sample) with unfilled positions. Over 50% of the districts with unfilled positions had less than 500 students. Seventy-four percent (74%) of the districts with unfilled positions had less than 1000 students.

District Size	Districts with Unfilled Positions		Unfilled Positions	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
<100	0	0.0	0	0.0
101-250	12	23.5	14	21.9
251-500	17	33.3	20	31.3
501-1,000	9	17.6	10	15.6
1,001-2,500	6	11.8	8	12.5
2,501-5,000	2	3.9	4	6.3
5,001-10,000	2	3.9	2	3.1
>10,000	3	5.9	6	9.4
Total	51	100.0	64	100.0

- Based on community college region boundaries, 14 districts in the Central region had 17 unfilled positions (27.5% of the 64 unfilled positions); 10 districts in the Northeast region had 11 unfilled positions (19.6%); 9 districts in the Southeast region had 11 unfilled positions (17.6%); 8 districts in the Panhandle region had 10 unfilled positions (15.7%); 6 districts in the West Central region had 7 unfilled positions (11.8%); and 4 districts in the Omaha Metro region had 8 unfilled positions (7.1%).
- The survey allowed school districts to identify multiple reasons for unfilled positions. The top four reasons for unfilled positions were as follows: 1) no applicants with the proper endorsement (50.0% of the responses for reasons for unfilled positions); 2) no quality applicants (42.2%); 3) no applicants (26.6%); and 4) qualified applicants refused offer for position (12.5%).
- The survey offered 13 solutions for school districts to choose when identifying how they solved the dilemma of unfilled positions. The three most reported solutions were:
 - ✓ Hiring a person with a provisional certificate
 - ✓ Hiring a person who was fully certified but not endorsed in the required area
 - ✓ Rearranging existing faculty assignments to accommodate classes not being covered.